

# Wing vice commander tours Rhein-Main

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Public Affairs

On Sept. 6, Col. John Tappan, 86th Airlift Wing Vice Commander toured Rhein-Main Air Base. The purpose of the visit was to gain a better understanding of the Rhein-Main community, our quality of life, and the tempo of our operations.

Accompanying Col. Tappan was Lt. Col. Bradley Denison, 86th Airlift Wing Rhein-Main Transition Program Management Office (PMO) Chief. They visited a number of facilities and organizations throughout the day. The tour focused mainly on support facilities for the contingency operation including family support, security forces, contingency lodging, the base chapel, the Rocket Sport Lounge, the flight kitchen, fire department, 64th Replacement Company, 726th Expeditionary Air Mobility Squadron and the 16th Air Expeditionary Group.

They were pleased to see the amount of support these organizations are providing. While visiting the family support center, Col. Tappan was impressed with the availability of communication back to the States. "It used to be you left for TDY and didn't talk to your family until you got back," Tappan said. "Now there is e-mail and videograms."

Col. Tappan and Lt. Col. Denison were surprised at the amount of work being done at a base that is closing. The visit provided Col. Tappan and Lt. Col. Denison the opportunity to relay significant planning issues back to Ramstein.



Photo By 2nd Lt. Uriah Orland

***Tech. Sgt. Joleo Dianala, flight kitchen chief, explains the process of meal preparation for the flight crews to Col. John Tappan, 86th Airlift Wing Vice Commander. The flight kitchens provides approximately 4,800 meals per month.***

A recurring topic of conversation throughout the day was manpower shortages. Col. Tappan expressed his concern and said, "Manning is an Air Force wide problem. We read about the issues Washington is dealing with."

He added that we (the Air Force) need

to keep the mission going with the resources we currently have available.

During lunch with the flight chiefs Col. Tappan spoke about keeping the troops motivated and focused. He also urged the commanders to talk with their troops about retention and pride in their jobs.